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FOR AMBASSADOR LEONARD

FOLLOWING MOSCOW 8997 SENT ACTION SECSTATE JUNE 22, 1977
REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T MOSCOW 8997

DEPT PASS TO NSC, ACDA, DOD, JCS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, XO, UR

SUBJECT: US-SOVIET WORKING GROUP ON INDIAN OCEAN ARMS LIMITATIONS:
INITIAL SESSION JUNE 22

1. SUMMARY:

INITIAL STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN MENDELEVICH OF
SOVIET DELEGATION AT FIRST FULL MEETING OF
WORKING GROUP ON INDIAN OCEAN ARMS LIMITATIONS JUNE
22 PUT DOWN STRONG MARKERS FOR A MAXIMALIST INITIAL
NEGOTIATING POSITION. HE STATED THAT ANY AGREE-
MENT SHOULD QUOTE TAKE ACCOUNT UNQUOTE OF US
ALLIES' FORCES IN THE REGION; THAT THE AREA
SHOULD BE DEFINED TO INCLUDE US BASES OUTSIDE THE

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PAGE 02 STATE 157299

INDIAN OCEAN; THAT THE FIRST REQUIREMENT WAS FOR
THE US TO AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO DISMANTLE ITS BASES;
AND THAT SSBN AND AIRCRAFT CARRIER DEPLOYMENT SHOULD
BE ELIMINATED. MENDELEVICH IDENTIFIED THREE
APPROACHES TO A POSSIBLE AGREEMENT. AT THE SAME
TIME, THE SOVIETS AVOIDED POLEMICAL OR CON-
FRONTATIONAL TONE; INDICATED INTEREST IN AVOID-

ING A PROPAGANDA SHOW; AND INDICATED UNDERSTANDING WE ARE AT THE BEGINNING OF A PROCESS THAT WILL REQUIRE FLEXIBILITY. END SUMMARY

2. AMBASSADOR LEV MENDELEVICH, CHAIRING THE FIRST FULL SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP, PRESENTED SOVIET STATEMENT FIRST (SEPTTEL FOLLOWS). IT NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS WANT TO REACH A JOINT AGREEMENT DECREASING THE LEVEL OF MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AS AN IMPORTANT LINK IN THE CHAIN OF US-USSR BILATERAL CONTACTS, AS AN EXTENSION OF DETENTE, AND AS A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND ADJACENT AREAS. HE STRESSED THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE US AND USSR FOR REDUCING THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT. SOVIET STATEMENT RAISED THREE GROUPS OF QUESTIONS ON WHICH THEY WANT TO COMPARE VIEWS AND SEEK MUTUAL AGREEMENT: (1) FOREIGN MILITARY BASES, WHICH QUOTE CONSTITUTE THE BASIC ELEMENT OF PERMANENT FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE UNQUOTE AND MUST BE DISMANTLED; (2) REDUCTION OF MILITARY ACTIVITIES, WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED AFTER AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO ELIMINATE BASES; AND (3) DEFINITION OF THE AREA WHICH MUST BE A QUOTE POLITICAL-STRATEGIC UNQUOTE DEFINITION TAKING INTO ACCOUNT US BASE

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PAGE 03 STATE 157299

FACILITIES OUTSIDE THE INDIAN OCEAN WHICH SUPPORT OUR MILITARY PRESENCE THERE.

3. AFTER PRESENTATION OF US STATEMENT BY DELEGATION CHAIRMAN PAUL WARNKE (SEPTTEL FOLLOWS), MENDELEVICH SUGGESTED FURTHER INFORMAL DISCUSSION TO CLARIFY POINTS RAISED IN STATEMENTS. SOVIETS CONCURRED THAT MILITARY PRESENCES OF THE TWO SIDES ARE NOT YET LARGE, AND IT IS THUS APPROPRIATE TO AVOID AN ARMS RACE NOW. SOVIETS AGREED WITH US THAT FREE ACCESS, FREE NAVIGATION, AND COMMERCIAL ACCESS SHOULD NOT BE ABRIDGED, AND LITTORAL STATES SHOULD BE FREE OF OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. SOVIETS ALSO AGREED OUR TALKS SHOULD BE BILATERAL, BUT SAID THAT NAVAL FORCES, AIRCRAFT, AND BASES OF ALLIED COUNTRIES COULD NOT BE IGNORED, AND MUST BE QUOTE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. UNQUOTE US CHAIRMAN NOTED THAT WE DIFFERED ON A NUMBER OF POINTS, AND EVIDENTLY AGREED ON OTHERS.

4. MENDELEVICH PICKED UP ON POINT THAT SECURITY OF BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT BE ADVERSELY

AFFECTED, AND SAID SOVIETS WOULD PREFER A FORMULA SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE QUOTE UNDIMINISHED SECURITY UNQUOTE PRINCIPLE FROM MBFR--NAMELY, THE PRINCIPLE OF QUOTE EQUALITY AND EQUAL SECURITY. UNQUOTE

COMMENT: THIS STRIKES US AN AN OBVIOUS SIGNAL THAT THE SOVIETS WILL ARGUE THAT OUR MILITARY ADVANTAGE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN SHOULD BE REDUCED ASYMMETRICALLY IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THEIR DEFINITION OF AN EQUAL OUTCOME, IN CONTRAST TO THE EASTERN MBFR POSITION REQUIRES EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS PRESERVING THE PRESENT QUOTE CORRELATION OF FORCES UNQUOTE IN THE AREA. END COMMENT
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PAGE 04 STATE 157299

5. SOVIETS AGREED WITH US THAT OUR TALKS SHOULD BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL, WITH NEITHER SIDE GIVING DETAILS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS TO THE PUBLIC. THEY AGREED THAT WE COULD EACH CONSULT ALLIES, AND SUGGESTED THAT WE TRY TO FIND A METHOD FOR COORDINATING OUR CONTACTS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE UN AD HOC INDIAN OCEAN COMMITTEE AND THE UNGA SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT IN 1978.

6. MENDELEVICH REFERRED TO OUR PROPOSAL THAT WE WORK FIRST TO STABILIZE OUR RESPECTIVE MILITARY PRESENCES AT CURRENT LEVELS AND THEN, IF A WORK-ABLE ARRANGEMENT IS ACHIEVED, CONSIDER REDUCTIONS. HE ASKED WHICH OF THREE POSSIBLE PHASING ARRANGEMENTS WE HAD IN MIND (HIS COMMENTS HERE WERE SOMEWHAT AMBIGUOUS: (1) AN AGREEMENT TO FREEZE AND TO INITIATE REDUCTIONS AND BANS ON CERTAIN CATEGORIES: (2) A TWO-STAGE AGREEMENT TO FREEZE AND THEN TO REDUCE ON AN AGREED SCHEDULE; OR (3) AGREE TO A FREEZE FOLLOWED BY SEPARATE NEGOTIATIONS ON REDUCTIONS AFTER THE INITIAL TREATY GOES INTO EFFECT. US CHAIRMAN SAID WE HAD NO SPECIFIC FORMULA IN MIND BEYOND WISHING TO ESTABLISH A PROCESS TO STABILIZE THE PRESENT SITUATION, ADDING THAT ANY OF THESE THREE APPROACHES COULD BE POSSIBLE WAYS TO PROCEED IN NEGOTIATIONS. ON A PERSONAL BASIS HE EXPRESSED A PREFERENCE FOR THE THIRD. MENDELEVICH SAID HIS PREFERENCE WOULD BE THE FIRST. DEPUTY HEAD OF SOVIET DELEGATION AMEL'KO ADDED QUOTE AND LIQUIDATION OF SOME ELEMENTS, UNQUOTE, E.G.,
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PAGE 05 STATE 157299

SSBN AND AIRCRAFT CARRIER DEPLOYMENTS, WHICH
HAD BEEN SINGLED OUT IN SOVIET STATEMENT.

7. SESSION CONCLUDED WITH AGREEMENT FOR RESTRICTED
MEETING OF ABOUT SIX ON EACH SIDE JUNE 23 FOR
INFORMAL EXCHANGE ON MILITARY ACTIVITIES AND
PRESENCE OF EACH SIDE. TOON UNQUOTE VANCE

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